

THE PSYCHEDELIC REVIEW

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Four Psilocybin Experiences

[Phenomenological accounts of spontaneous or induced transcendent experiences are valuable source material for the psychology of consciousness expansion. Each account is different. The range of experiences is as wide as the range of human temperament and outlook.]

Of these four accounts, the first, by Frederick Swain, describes an experience with the original Sacred Mushroom, in Oaxaca.¹ It is interesting to compare the Mazatec Indian ritual with the modern rituals of experiment and therapy. // The second is by an artist who took synthetic psilocybin in a "naturalistic" experiment. // The third is by a graduate student in psychology who participated in the same series of experiments. In addition to the perceptual changes reported in the previous statement, many interpersonal aspects of the experience are emphasized in this account. // The fourth account was written by a prison inmate who took part in an experimental rehabilitation program that used psilocybin.]

I

Primitive religious rituals have always fascinated me, and I have sought them out in my travels whenever possible. A few years ago I heard of the discovery of a new hallucinogenic mushroom in Mexico by the mycologist, R. Gordon Wasson. The religious rituals woven around the mushroom captured my imagination. I decided to investigate at the first opportunity. It was not till last fall that the opportunity suddenly came. I found myself in Mexico hunting for this mushroom, unfortunately with little knowledge of its nature, other than the meager information that it produces strange visions when eaten. I knew also that this species of mushroom grows in the mountains of southern Mexico, and that there is a Curandera (or Shaman) in the village of Huautla de Jimenez who performs religious mushroom rituals.

I went to Mexico City with the hope of obtaining more detailed information before continuing on to the mountains. But those who might have knowledge of the mushroom at the University of Mexico were on vacation. A professor who had experimented with it at the Institute of Anthropology was in Europe. I could not find anyone who had even heard of the mushroom. So I was forced to start out alone by bus to the village, which I located on a map, in the Sierra Mazatec range in the state of Oaxaca.

After a long day's ride we arrived at the town of Tehuacan, where I had to give up my bus for a broken-down outmoded public carrier, loaded with

¹ This account was first published under the title "The Mystical Mushroom" ("El Hongo Místico") in *Tomorrow*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (Autumn 1962), pp. 27-34. The permission of author and publisher to reprint this article is gratefully acknowledged.

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vegetables and chickens as well as people, which took us to the village of Teotitlan in the foothills of the Sierra Mazatec. From that point on there were no regular transportation facilities. If you have ever travelled in the remote areas of southern Mexico, you may appreciate the difficulties I encountered. In Teotitlan there was not anyone who spoke a word of English, and I speak no Spanish. By sign language I located a room in an inn, if such it could be called. The sheets on the sagging bed had been used, so I slept on top of the covers with my clothes on.

The following morning I began the frustrating ordeal of arranging transportation into the mountains. The few people who had jeeps showed no interest and refused to take me. The only one who showed concern over my problem was a young girl. She spent the entire day leading me from one person to another, to no avail. At one point she did arrange to rent a horse for me at 250 pesos, which amounts to twenty dollars. I should have been able to buy the nag for that. But in any case the man decided not to rent the horse after all. The following day the girl arranged with the postmaster to drive me into the mountains in his jeep. He told me by sign language I should be ready at seven o'clock that evening. I could not understand why he wanted to start on such a difficult journey at night; however, I was there at seven sharp. By this time it didn't surprise me that he too had changed his mind. I tried as best I could to convince him he should take me in the morning, but he indicated he had to work the following day.

The next morning, purely by chance, I was walking the streets ready to call the whole thing off when the postmaster appeared, ready to go. He had extra cans of gasoline and two other Mexicans in the back of his jeep. I climbed aboard and off we rode in a cloud of dust. There the girl was, waving and smiling at me, with the sun glistening on her lovely gold teeth. Her feeling for me was obvious, and I was grateful to her.

Soon I learned why it was so difficult to get transportation into the mountains. The paths were narrow and were forever winding upwards, around and over mountains in hairpin turns with drops over the side of the road, 1,000 feet, straight down. Moreover, no one had bothered to inform me that over twenty landslides blocked the route due to the rains. No one had penetrated the mountains for twenty-five days. Huautla de Jimenez had been sealed off from the world.

We of course were the first ones through, but we worked hard for the distinction. The smaller landslides we dug through with shovels. For some we waited while crews of local mountain Indians dug through for us. Others we skirted by building logs and stones out over the edge of the cliff, then gingerly inching the jeep around with only a few inches clearance.

At home in Boston I am considered a reckless driver. But Mexican drivers cannot be imagined by Bostonians. I can assure you I held my breath more than once on this trip. We would sometimes take only a few inches' clearance at full speed. The driver would not even blink an eye. Mexicans are fearless

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in an automobile. But they are good drivers. I have never seen an accident, though I expected them, time and again.

Precipitation was heavy. There were always clouds below and above us. It rained every afternoon. On the map Huautla de Jimenez looked less than fifty miles. But due to the winding roads it was well over a hundred. Finally, late at night we arrived caked with mud and dead tired. The postmaster arranged rooms for us. I must say they were better than the ones in Teotitlan.

The following day I walked through the village to familiarize myself with the surroundings. We were near the highest peak in the Sierra Mazatec. I don't know the altitude, but it seemed around 10,000. This was it. From here there was no place to go, only a few trails leading to the isolated huts of poor Mazatecs. It seemed we were on top of the world. Beautiful and strange trees were everywhere. The village was on the side of the mountain, with valleys below and the mountain peak above. As far as the eye could see in every direction there was nothing but mountain peaks, with the cloud covered sky as a backdrop. The air was clean and cool from the rain and the altitude. I loved Huautla de Jimenez very much.

The Mazatecs, of course, guessed I had come for the mushroom. Why else would a Gringo come to Huautla? No one would ever have heard of Huautla de Jimenez except for the mushroom. It struck them as very humorous. When they saw me coming they would shape their hands in the form of a mushroom and pretend they were eating it. Then they would laugh and slap their knees and throw their arms hilariously around each other. Soon I was the joke of the town. Most of the women and children did not laugh, however, since they were afraid of me. Still other enterprising Mazatecs tried as best they could to separate me from my money. But I did not have very much and I held my own against them. Most of the Mazatecs of this region do not even speak Spanish. I understand Mazateca has four dialects and is not related to any other Indian language. However, I was very fortunate in finding a girl who spoke a little broken English which she learned in a school.

Soon I learned the name of the Curandera who performs the mushroom ritual, Santa Maria Sabina. The Mazatecs pointed to the top of the peak where she lived, overlooking the village. I asked one of the boys to lead me to her house. But he felt too lazy that day for such a long climb and wanted twenty pesos. That seemed like too much money for such a small boy. I decided to find my own way and started up the side of the mountain, following the trails. Now and then I would stop and ask directions, calling out the name of Santa Maria Sabina. The women would run into their huts and close the door. The men would stare at me, while some would point the way. Finally, with my heart pounding from the climb, I reached a point near the top where Mazatecs came out to greet me. They announced that here was the house of Santa Maria Sabina.

Santa Maria Sabina

The hut was only one room, with a dirt floor, thatched roof and mud walls. The household consisted of Santa Maria as the head, three men who were

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her sons, three women, and numerous children, all living in the same drafty room. They all slept, ate and lived on the floor. There was a wood fire in the center, without a chimney. The smoke escaped through the sides of the wall, which had many holes and gaps, where mud had fallen away. The damp and chilly wind came from below, up the side of the mountain, over the ridge, through the walls of the hut, and out the other side. No one was ever really warm during the rainy season. The food was unclean and the water was bad. How these poor people managed to survive under such conditions was a mystery to me. However, it was their way of life and they were well adjusted to it. I naturally ignored these external factors. Otherwise I would never have come to know them well or understand their religion. I had come to eat their mushroom. I approached them with warmhearted friendliness for which I was well rewarded. At first they were slightly suspicious of me, but other Americans had been there before. Gradually they became quite friendly.

Santa Maria Sabina was about sixty-five years of age and looked much like any other Mazatec woman. She was humble, reserved, and worked hard at the daily chores with the other women. But I knew she was famed among the Mazatecs as a Shaman. As I watched her closely, it could be seen she had wisdom in her dark eyes, sunk deep behind her high wrinkled cheekbones. She had composure and a quiet contentment which added to her maturity.

I drew from my pocket a picture of a hallucinogenic mushroom. The Latin name is *Psilocybe mexicana* Heim. The Mazatec Indians call it Teonanacatl, meaning "God's flesh." Her eyes brightened and she talked about the mushroom. After watching me closely for a few minutes, Santa Maria indicated she would have the mushroom ritual that night for my benefit. Since nothing more could be said, I went outside and lay under a tree to rest and wait for the night, while the fog rolled up from below and surrounded me.

When night came I reentered the hut and sat close to the fire, while the household ate their dinner. They of course offered me some, and I accepted a little watery soup and some tortillas. It is very easy for a North American to get dysentery. In fact, I did end up with it before I finished the trip. At that time I had not had water for four days, and I was not to have any for another week when I returned to the plains below. As a substitute I drank beer and bottled soda pop. For food I ate only tortillas, beans, and sometimes a little soup.

When their meal was finished, the straw mats were unrolled and the children were put to bed. The women lovingly caressed the children till they fell asleep. Then the three women went to bed, leaving only Santa Maria, the three sons and myself.

In one corner of the hut an altar had been set up, with two long candles and a glass vigil in the center, surrounded by bouquets of flowers. A straw mat was spread before the altar and Santa Maria sat on it crosslegged, motioning for me to sit beside her. The three men sat behind us. The candles were lit. Then she pulled a large bowl of freshly picked mushrooms from under the altar.

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The heads of the mushrooms were brown and rather small, about an inch in diameter. The stems were long and white. She carefully examined the mushrooms, then deposited six in each of three cups which she gave to the three men behind us. She then gave me a cup with ten mushrooms. I was glad to see I got more than six. She then took ten for herself. The mushrooms still had dirt on them from the fields and they had been handled a great deal. I tried to say they should be washed, but no one understood me. So what could I do? I ate them, dirt and all.

Each of us took five to ten minutes to eat the mushrooms. No sooner had we eaten them than the three men behind us began vomiting and spitting. I was surprised to learn this is what everyone is supposed to do. There was a large pan placed to the side of us for that purpose. They all indicated I too should throw up. But I felt no nausea. I didn't feel like it. So I declined the offer. This surprised them and they discussed the matter among themselves. I felt fine, about the same as before I ate the mushrooms. I also felt slightly superior that I did not have to throw up. I noticed Santa Maria did not throw up either.

I asked for more mushrooms, feeling that if I should not have more, Santa Maria would have the good sense not to give them to me. She's supposed to be able to look at you and tell how many you should eat. She looked me in the eye a moment. Then she put eight more mushrooms in my cup. I had eaten five of these when one of the Mazatecs behind us realized how many mushrooms I was eating. He excitedly tapped me on the shoulder, wanting to know the number I had eaten. I counted out fifteen on my fingers. He slapped the side of his head with his hand, as though he were going to fall over. Then the three began saying No! No! No!, meaning I had eaten too many. No one, absolutely no one, eats fifteen of these particular mushrooms, other than Santa Maria. They were really afraid for me. With this information I carefully set aside the other three and did not eat them. But Santa Maria remained undisturbed and said nothing. This was comforting. She sat quietly facing the altar and began chanting. She sang the chants like a canticle, with rich, vibrant and tender tones.

Within half an hour the mushrooms began to take effect. First there were vivid flashing colors. Then a clammy chill came over me and I began shaking. This did not upset me greatly. I expected the mushroom to have some toxic effect. I did not intend to let a few cold chills interfere with the experience, after having come so far. I pulled my collar tight around my neck and sat there, shaking. My joints began to stiffen a little. But then, within fifteen minutes, these toxic effects subsided and I felt wonderful. All the fatigue of the day left me. I felt strong and light of body. My back straightened, and I never felt better. I relaxed and began to meditate on the colors.

The chanting was fascinating, in a rising and falling crescendo. The notes had a crisp freshness about them which carried authority. Intricate art motifs appeared in vivid colors, with a predominance of light blue. But there were also greens and reds in various shades. The motifs unfolded in a long pano-

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ramic view. Then they formed a spiral and we travelled down the spiral. Our sense of sound was heightened and we heard distant music.

Of course I cannot be certain, but it seemed to me all five of us were having the same experience. Our consciousness changed many times during the night. It seemed we all changed together. I attribute this to the control Santa Maria exerted over us. The various states of consciousness seemed to vary with the rhythm of her chants. If she changed her timing, our visions changed with it.

The motifs subsided and our surroundings were immediately transformed into a new scene. There was a light, warm, red glow which engulfed us. Then there appeared before us dancing celestial eagle gods, with all their plumage. The vision was not blurred or uncertain. The lines and colors were so sharply focused that it seemed much more real than anything I normally see with my eyes. The dancers were accompanied by a sensitive, ethereal music with a background of drums. The timing was fast, but soft. The eagle gods were exceedingly graceful, fully absorbed in their dancing. They became ecstatic. We too became absorbed with them. It was wonderful.

One thing bothered me. Where was the hut, the altar, the damp ground and the sleeping people? The candles on the altar had been extinguished to heighten the experience. My curiosity aroused, I took a match from my pocket and lit it to look around. Everything seemed to be in order. As I put my mind on the hut it came into focus. But the vision of the dancers also remained. Somehow the two worlds seemed to intermingle. If I concentrated on the hut, it was predominate. But if I concentrated on the vision of the dancers, my awareness of the hut receded. Or, if I wished, I could maintain a balance of the two. I seemed to have control of my will and intellect. I was able to point my mind in any direction I wished. However, I felt my mind in turn was influenced by the emotional content of the visions, much in the same manner that emotions influence the mind in normal circumstances.

I then turned the match towards Santa Maria. What a surprise! She seemed transfigured. Her eyes shone with a glow that seemed to light up her head. She looked thirty years younger. There was not a wrinkle in her face. Her skin was light, clear and almost translucent. Here, at night, she was master of another world, the world of the mushroom. She was regal, absorbed in ecstasy. What a contrast to her miserable existence during the day. She was then a humble, unbelievably poor Mazatec. At night she was a queen in her strange mythological realm. I blew out the match and returned to my vision with enthusiasm.

The dancing soon came to an end and the music stopped. The eagle gods vanished. A new scene quickly took shape. I found all five of us sitting a few yards apart from each other in a semi-circle. We were in the center of a vast, endless desert. We were merely sitting in silence, each absorbed in his own thoughts. I found my own mind grappling with the nature of reality. I felt somehow I was on the verge of a discovery, a new realization which I couldn't quite put my finger on. It was an eerie feeling. Time stood

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still. Gradually the feeling came that we had been sitting there an extremely long time. In fact, it seemed we had always been sitting there. Then instinctively a name came to me from the recesses of my mind, as though I had always known it, the "Land of Eternal Waiting." Yes, it was clear to me that we were waiting there eternally. What we were waiting for, I don't know; but we were definitely waiting.

The memory of my past life began to dim. When was it I lived my life on earth? It seemed many years ago, if I had lived there at all. I began to worry. Would this never end? I certainly didn't wish to remain here forever. What were we waiting for? I was losing my identity. I felt it might be a hypnotic spell. I tried to arouse my memory by recalling the name of my father and close friends. At first the names were dim, out of some distant past. But with effort they returned quite clearly. Still I felt I had lost contact with life on earth. I was really worried. Perhaps I had died from mushroom poisoning without realizing it, long ago. How could I know for sure? Perhaps I really was in the Land of Eternal Waiting.

Silence

Silence had become a part of me. It seemed years since I had spoken. But I roused myself and forced myself to speak. To my surprise the Mazatecs answered in English. I swear it. This really was hard for me to believe. It shook me up a bit. There was some kind of telepathic communication between us. We could understand one another, each in his own language. I was later told it sounded to them that I spoke in Mazateca.

They answered, "Yes, we really are in the Land of Eternal Waiting. This is reality. This is your true abode. Your life on earth never really happened. It was only a dream. You have been sitting here with us all along. You have been dreaming a very long time. Now you are awakening from your dream. You are coming back to reality. We belong here together. This alone is real."

What they were saying seemed strangely true. At first I wouldn't admit it, but I felt this was more real than anything I had ever experienced. Was it really possible? Yes! I concluded, it was possible. This was reality. All else was unreal. I was awakening from a dream. A veil had been lifted. The past was shattered. I kept scratching my head. Wow!

We talked a long while on the subtle nature of reality. They explained it to me with patience and kindness. Normally the Mazatecs are a simple child-like people, absorbed in their struggle for existence. During the day I never detected a tendency for intellectual pursuits. But here in the night with their mushroom, they were concerned with nothing else. They were highly articulate and presented their views with wisdom and insight. They thoroughly convinced me. Finally, we returned to silence.

But still something disturbed me as I sat there. My mind began working overtime. If I were dead to the world, I might as well make the best of it. I figured if I really had died many years ago, my family and friends were

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probably dead also by this time. True, I was in rapport with these people and I really seemed to belong with them. But, I would be damned if I would continue sitting there throughout eternity. Is that all there is to do? How foolish can you be? This might be reality, but it was senseless, purposeless. I felt like a fool. I began to get mad, really hot.

I turned to them and shouted, "You're all crazy, and so am I. We're all mad, stark raving mad. We can't sit here like this forever. We're absolutely crazy!" They all politely nodded their heads in agreement and understanding. "Yes! We are all crazy. However, this is reality nonetheless. There is reality even in madness." They had an irrefutable answer for everything. I was finding out even more of the truth, too much of the truth. They tried to soothe me. But I would not be soothed.

I announced I was leaving, there and then, though I didn't know where to go. Only the endless desert lay before me. I stood up to walk away. But my legs were like rubber. I was so wobbly I couldn't take a step. This made me even more furious. I felt I was being tricked.

Under the influence of the mushroom, one's power of concentration is far more pronounced than normally. You become deeply absorbed in whatever you may be thinking. There is no external distraction. You can glue your mind on one thought or one emotion and hold it there as long as you wish, indefinitely if need be. Whatever you do is emotionally intense.

The situation called for drastic action. I really had to get away if I were going to maintain any sort of emotional balance. I threw back my head and willed myself out of that place by sheer force of concentration. It was as though an explosive charge inside of me ignited. I exploded upwards like a rocket, instantaneously, straight up through the sky. The others followed me, as though they were sucked up by the vacuum created by my ascent.

I emerged in some delicate ethereal upper region of space. I found myself standing, calm, collected and free. I was immediately master of myself and my surroundings. The realization quickly came that everything is a state of mind. I am free and master of myself if I will myself so. I am whatever I believe myself to be, if my belief is strong enough. My mind was released from its previous struggle. I felt strength, like a giant. I felt like a god. Yes, this was it, the real moment of truth.

The Mazatecs sat down crosslegged beside each other while I remained standing, deeply absorbed in my realizations. They looked at me and chanted "Santos, Santos, Santos" in unison. This distracted me slightly from my thoughts. I said, "What? What's that? Santos? Who is Santos? Am I Santos?" They answered, "Yes, you are Santos. Now you are coming to know your true self."

They waited a moment for this to sink in. Well, I really began to feel like Santos, whoever he is. I became totally identified with a mental image of Santos which took shape in my mind. It was accompanied by a feeling of ecstasy. I seemed to move automatically, guided not by my will, but by my

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emotions. My emotions overflowed. I felt a Divine rhythm beat in the core of my heart. To express these feelings, I rose on one foot, light as a feather, and turned slowly on my toes. I was not in the least wobbly. I now had perfect physical control. I began to do the eagle dance. I danced with my arms and torso more than my feet. Then I began to chant in Mazateca, and I moved and swayed to the rhythm of my own chanting. It all came about as naturally as breathing the air.

The dance did not take place only in my mind. I really did do the eagle dance with my physical body. At one point I became vaguely aware I was dancing in the mud hut. I could sense and even see many people crowding into the hut. Other Mazatecs in the area were apparently pushing in to watch me. I could see them if I wished, or I could be lost from them in my dance of ecstasy. Their presence did not disturb me as it normally would. I quickly became reabsorbed in my dancing and my identity as Santos, oblivious to all else.

I don't know how long I danced. Somewhere along the way, my chanting changed into a song, all in Mazateca. Now normally there is nothing at all unusual about my voice. It is quite ordinary. But in that state of consciousness, tones came out of my throat which are unimaginable to me, long, sweet, beautiful, exotic tones. The notes flowed out with strength and power, without effort. It is hard to believe, but it did happen. It really did.

The following day I was told my voice carried through the valley below and was heard all over Huautla de Jimenez. Everyone in the surrounding area heard me. Those in the immediate vicinity came crowding into the hut to watch. It must have been quite a performance. As I write this account, I sort of drift off and relive the whole thing.

When my wonderful lovely songs came to an end, I began to lose my feeling of godhood. I changed completely. I became a child. I did not particularly want to be a child, but I became one nevertheless. I felt like a child and acted like one. Finally I lay on the floor like a child crying for its mother. Not its earthly mother, but some kind of Divine Godly mother.

After lying on the floor for some time, I began to return to my normal state of consciousness. The effects of the mushroom then wore off rather quickly. The visions ceased. The transition took perhaps twenty minutes. The only thing which remained was the emotional impact of the experience. My surroundings lost the vivid colors. Everything looked disgustingly normal. I then stood up rather sheepishly, tried to look nonchalant, and lit a cigarette. It was four o'clock in the morning. I had been under the influence of the mushroom for seven hours. Apparently about two hours longer than the Mazatecs, due to the larger quantity I had eaten. Perhaps my experience was more intense than theirs for the same reason. I was not the least tired. Physically, I felt in excellent condition. In fact, I then carried on a full day of activity without any fatigue. I could not detect any ill effect or any form of hangover from the use of the mushroom.

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Initiation as a Mazatec

At daybreak, Santa Maria initiated me as a Mazatec. Not as an honorary one, but as an honest-to-goodness Mazatec. She rubbed a green earthy substance into my arms, chanted, and proclaimed me her son. But we could no longer communicate with one another by words, only sign language.

As I descended into the village that day, I found the attitude of the population towards me quite different than the day before. No one made fun of me. Everyone came to me and tried to talk. They would then talk among themselves about me. They would point at me, then put their arms around me. Obviously, they felt I was someone special when it came to eating mushrooms. Even prices came down. Cigarettes were cheaper. Food, beer and the few other items I bought were all a little less than the day before. Yes indeed, these were my people.

After a few days I had to leave Huautla, though I wanted to stay on. I was running short of money and I didn't want to impose on the Mazatecs. The food and lack of good water was beginning to tell on my health. I had no blankets and no equipment. I didn't seem to be of much use in their workaday world. All I was good for was eating mushrooms. And they were running out of mushrooms. So I had to leave, with, of course, reluctance.

I don't recommend the mushroom to anyone, even though they are physically harmless. They are not a narcotic. They are not habit-forming. It is not possible to develop a physiological craving for them. The mushroom season lasts four months, from June to September. The other eight months the Indians do not miss them and go about their normal life. But many people would be terrified at the loss of identity caused by the mushroom. One American I know of became hysterical with fear. Some experience adverse psychological effects and go through horrifying ordeals. Even some Indians are afraid to eat the mushroom. Most people do not even want these states of consciousness. Then even at best, how many people can make a trip to Huautla de Jimenez in the Sierra Mazatec?

But each person responds differently, according to his temperament and psychological makeup. For those who are psychologically attuned to this sort of thing and who seek the hidden depths of the unconscious mind, the possibilities of exploration are unlimited. The variations are endless. One can enter mythological realms and mental worlds undreamed of. I should also add that if one gives spiritual meaning to these experiences, such as the Indians do, the results are far more significant than for one who merely sits down, eats the mushroom and waits to see what happens.

Of course, many people criticize the use of the mushroom as barbaric and primitive. Some consider these states of mind psychopathic. Of course, I agree that if someone did the eagle dance on Tremont Street in Boston, it would be psychopathic. But to do the eagle dance in the dead of night in Huautla de Jimenez is the most normal thing in the world. What we consider psychopathic depends entirely on our social conditioning. I don't feel a moral

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obligation to remain true to the social structure of New England. I much prefer to identify myself with the Mazatecs.

The question also arises as to whether the mushroom creates a pseudo-transcendental consciousness. I don't think the mushroom creates anything. Visions and states of consciousness cannot rise out of the inert chemicals contained within the mushroom. These experiences can only be produced from within the mind. And the mind can only produce what it contains. The mushroom can only act as a releasing agent through its chemical components. I have not studied any scientific papers on the *Psilocybe mexicana* Heim. I can only analyze the mushroom from my own unscientific experience with it. My experience was not intellectual, but emotional. Each person must try it for himself if he wishes to pass judgment.

If anyone can have these experiences without recourse to the mushroom, fine and good. Certainly such visions would be far more desirable if they could be experienced without the help of a chemical releasing agent. The mushroom has its limitations. I certainly do not wish to be dependent on a mushroom for my spiritual life. Its value lies in that it can open up for the first time in vivid panorama that which previously lay hidden and unknown. It can make us deeply aware of our own mystic nature in a way that would not otherwise be possible.

Sometimes, even now, I think perhaps Santa Maria was right when we were sitting in the "Land of Eternal Waiting." Maybe I am still sitting there, dreaming. Perhaps I have only resumed my dream of living in this world. Perhaps my being here is only the product of my imagination. How can I really know? Can we ever be really sure of anything? But if all is a dream, I must say the dream I like best is the one where I shoot up through the sky and become Santos. Man, that's really living.



II

It is difficult to write this type of report because my major way of expressing myself is painting rather than through words. I believe that the experience can be broken down and each part examined by itself, and in that way I can try to present a total idea of what was experienced. Some things now do seem either foolish or unbelievable, but I shall try to be as accurate as possible.

The first thing I will consider will be the visual part of the experience. My vision seemed to broaden and I was able to see everything at once — to see everything totally and never really feel that I was unable to see small details. However, when focusing on a particular object all details became visible — in other words I think that the details cannot be seen in the total but were never missed. When focusing or narrowing the visual field, I was

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able to see all details. I was able to concentrate entirely on one object to the total exclusion of all others. The one object would seem to radiate light or glow from within. From time to time other members of the group would take on this glow which would attract my attention, and then I would narrow the gaze. This inner glow for some reason seemed to disappear when that person's reverie was interrupted by someone else's comment. People seemed different from objects, in this regard. After focusing on an object the object would glow, but with people the person could start to glow before focusing on him. All space seemed to be curved, and the importance of verticals and horizontals diminished greatly. I was acutely aware of this because of my extreme interest in the Bauhaus painters and the DeStyle group. I have always felt that the vertical and horizontal orientation was extremely important, but the whole idea seemed to break down. Even the Cubists seemed unimportant. A new arrangement of space seemed necessary. Objects didn't seem to end abruptly but had an ability to extend themselves. This may be partially due to my feeling toward the objects and their feeling toward me at the time.

Color and the reality of space were actually not a new experience to me. It was very similar to the reality of both during a period of high painting excitement. In fact I believe that visual disorders may occur more with slight turpentine intoxication, sometimes referred to as turpentine poisoning, and the lack of oxygen which takes place in the artist's studio (fairly large quantities of oxygen are consumed by the drying of linseed oil and reduce the amount of oxygen present in the air, combined with turpentine vapor; this can and does affect perception). Space itself took on a very real quality and was related in its shape to visual concentration. When looking at an object close at hand, I felt as though I were in a cylinder of space. Space closed in around me but was open at the top. When looking at the total, the corners of the room were unimportant and seemed to curve — the space of the room was not really related to the four walls but was enclosed within them. Once again the top seemed open and the floor uneven. When leaving the room and then coming back into the room, it seemed to have an umbrella-shaped top (mushroom-shaped) which hung below the ceiling. When looking out of the window, there always was a thorough detachment. The space was not as real. Everything was clear and sharp, but not real.

Hearing was also changed considerably. I could hear everything quite clearly — never quite sure where the sound was coming from. Coins jingling in a pocket, keys being rubbed together, someone scratching, and voices, were all of equal importance. Sounds which were ordinarily screened out were from time to time annoying because they could interrupt someone's speech.

Physically I felt extremely well. Here I think it is important to mention that in November I underwent surgery for a rectal fistula. It hasn't, to the present time, healed. This is the first time for me since the middle of October that I have been able to move freely without pain. Naturally that was delightful. It is difficult for me to be certain of whether or not the drug was a real help in this area, but for the past week I have actually felt more comfortable and less worried about this situation. It was a great pleasure to move. I never

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felt that my reactions were slowed or impaired in any way. In fact I really felt much freer in my movement and capable of performing any physical task.

Perhaps the most amazing thing to me was what happened to me when I wanted to express myself verbally. Most of the time I felt that there was no reason to talk. When I felt that something was important to say, I first had to find the words to express the thought. I was really thinking thoughts free from the limits of verbiage. It was then a matter of translating thought into words. Many times when I wanted to say something I would struggle to find the words and by the time I had found them fortunately someone else had said it and I could relax! While many things were not discriminatory, I think that on the idea level I was most discriminatory. Ideas presented by others in the group were either accepted or rejected with intensity. I was either happy at what had been said or extremely annoyed.

Possibly the most important part of the experiment for me was my awareness of a totality and awareness of nothing. Thoughts took on a great reality, and I could sit and enjoy myself thinking. Sometimes the thoughts were so delightful and so real that I would laugh happily over them. While the thoughts took on this reality at the peak point of the experience, I felt that I was able not to think. I could sit empty and then a thought would pulse through my mind. I was never quite sure whether the thought came from — originated — with me or outside me. Many times I felt like a large receiver through which things were passing. I felt as though I were collecting information. This made me extremely happy. My laughter was about this happiness and was not in response to what other people in the room had said.

From time to time a rather petty unimportant disagreement took place between the other people in the room. My immediate response would be to try to take sides, and before I could say anything I would realize how foolish this situation really was and would laugh at myself for having thought of participating in such foolishness.

There were times when I became extremely restless and walked about the room. It almost felt that I could walk away from my physical self. I would walk and then stop walking in hopes that I could continue on. This would happen once or twice, but I was snapped back and never was able to stay outside for any duration — even though I think I would have liked to. This just seemed as though it should follow but never did. I was not afraid. Everything that was happening to me was good. Everything that I touched — everything that I saw.

Several times I was bothered by H. to do some drawings, which seemed to be an invasion of privacy to even think of doing such a thing at that time. What was happening was more important to me than trying to record it. Being was the most important thing, and I didn't want anything to interfere with being. I felt a communion with all things. It was difficult for me to determine whether I was reaching out to all things or whether all things were reaching out to me. I now feel that it must have been a mutual reaching

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out because I was convinced at the highest point that the right wall loved the left wall and that all walls loved me. And that I loved them. At this very high point, I seemed to be aware of everything within my view as well as those outside my view. What was behind me was as real as what was in front of me. At one point I am sure that everything came together with me. I became excited at this point — extremely excited. I tried to walk away from myself. At one point I walked from the room to the next, and for a brief moment was outside the house. I didn't feel the cold or the snow. I then found myself back in the house. Walking back into the other room, everything seemed to have slowed down. I sat down, put my head back and closed my eyes. B. put on Ginsberg's recording. With my head back and my feet stretched out, the space for the first time changed its dimension. It flattened out. It felt almost as though my head were above water and my body was in the water — or that my body was not. Ginsberg drifted to me across this level plain, then started to fade. My eyes were closed, and a large black pool started to open up in front of them. I was vaguely conscious at this point that I was almost not breathing, and took several deep breaths. I seemed to be gasping for air. This worried me for a minute, but all was good and I stopped worrying. As the space continued to expand, a small white object seemed to be coming toward me or perhaps I was going toward it — extremely brilliant. As I came closer, I was able to see a red spot in the white. I was very anxious to find out what would happen, and then someone said, "Do you want to listen to this?" and someone else said, "No, take it off" and it disappeared. I remained in this position, trying to get back, trying to find out.

When I came back it seemed to me that I had to think how to breathe, how to get it started. I felt that I had not taken a breath in some time and gasped for air. Once again — not at all worried. The one time during the entire session that I was aware of any taste or odor was when I came back and there seemed to be a strange taste in my mouth and a most unusual odor. I really don't know what it was or how to describe it — the first time I have come in contact with it. I felt that I had to have something to drink. B. obliged.

The plain was gone and I became aware of different parts of my body getting extremely warm, which felt extremely good. No part ever seemed to cool off, just other parts getting warm. After some time this ceased, and I have a feeling that this part of it was over. I opened my eyes. In a way I was surprised to find where I was and began to move about, a little disappointed but quite happy. At this point my head was filled with thoughts — all important thoughts, all private thoughts. I was still extremely happy and would from time to time chuckle to myself about how wonderful it was to be, and how good to know all that I knew. I must confess that this feeling has not left. Many thoughts are still buzzing around, and I am still happy.

After that, I felt physically worn out, extremely tired, but my mind was still very very active. After walking around to my car and driving home, this physical exhaustion left me in about thirty minutes and I felt very good again.

There are, I think, important aspects to what happened to me which have

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extended themselves over a much longer duration of time. My wife and I had made a commitment for that Saturday evening quite some time ago, and we felt obligated to follow through with the engagement. I suppose I was still "high" at that point, but it surprised me how I was able to project to others my feeling that things were good. Several people mentioned that I made them feel very good. Now I think that the most important part of what has happened to me, since the experiment, is that I seem to be able to get a good deal more work done. Sunday afternoon I did about six hours' work in two hours' time. I did not worry about what I was doing — I just did it. Three or four times I wanted a particular color pencil or a triangle and would go directly to it, lift up three or four pieces of paper and pull it out. Never thought of where it was — just knew I wanted it and picked it up. This of course amazed me, but I just relied on it — found things immediately. My wife was a little annoyed at me on Sunday afternoon because I was so happy, but I would not be dissuaded.

When painting, it generally takes me an hour and a half to two hours to really get into the painting, and three or four hours to really hit a peak. Tuesday I hit a peak in less than a half hour. The aesthetic experience was more intense than I have experienced before, so much so that several times I had to leave the studio, and finally decided that I was unable to cope with it and left for good! I now have this under control to some extent, but I am delighted that I can just jump into it without the long buildup, and I certainly hope it continues.

... all these words really don't say it.

III

The first noticeable change came about with regard to strange color effects. The room changed in illumination and, with it, also in feeling-tone, from bright and sharp to glowing reddish and warm. For the first time, I seemed to understand the existential-phenomenological experience of shifts in one's total state of being and the transformation of one's perceptual world as a consequence of this. Everything is pulling together and tightening up, or expanding and receding, with the concomitant change in color perception which leads to or precipitates a diffuse and global experience of warmth or other feeling-dimensions. In addition to this, one sees after-images following movement, and a strong glowing of color or color-radiation. At first, however, there are no hallucinations. It is rather like a fluorescent light which comes from within the eyes of the others or which is penetrating the objects that one visualizes. The light is unsteady and glittering, as if reflected by diamonds or other precious stones in a tremendous variety of very rich colors. Then everything becomes transparent and nebulous, a continuous change and transfiguration. One has the impression of drifting clouds, and gentle flowing and

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intermingling of boundaries and substances. All blemishes disappear, and one perceives familiar objects and particularly other faces or movements of limbs in a peculiarly stylized manner, as if the essence or underlying idea were struggling or pressing, rather, to reveal itself.

Next, peculiar boundary shifts enter into one's awareness — definite shifts of perspective. This manifests itself in such a way that the limbs of one's body as well as those of the other people in the room suddenly appear isolated and independent; they glide or soar away and interpenetrate, or coalesce into each other. It is a most striking experience that the vertical and horizontal ordering-principles gently disappear; they slip away, so to speak; the coordinate system vanishes, perhaps the most vivid experience or realization of perceptual change.

Early there is another strange experience. One suddenly feels a kind of reversal of structure of one's head and eyes. It is as if one's skull was suddenly expanding like a balloon being blown up and that a huge spherical hollow was thus created which then served as the stage of visual drama. The eyes appear no longer as looking out from within into the world, but rather they are reversed upon themselves, clinging to the walls of the hollow sphere looking in and moving freely along the total inner surface of that sphere, so that ever new perspectives are opened up and phenomena reveal themselves in thousandfold manifestations at a phantastic speed. One can also feel one's eyelids much like a curtain that can be drawn or let down. One has the experience that one's head is like a cloak of different layers of cloth, like a curtain, which are all in movement, floating before one's visual field so that one can penetrate them. The inside and outside is felt, not as contained within myself, a well-described container or system, but rather out there or in here in a purely directional sense; a visual direction, not a blind orientation, i.e., knowing where one is in our usual experience. One can hold one's head in one's hands, for instance, and suddenly one experiences one's fingers as strangely knocking from the outside of one's face, disconnected and foreign, then elongating and growing into grotesque but friendly, snake-like creatures, or rather creations, as one finds them in Miro or Picasso. Fragments break off, there is constant mutation of parts, which then slide away to the side in a swirling movement, interpenetrating each other. Together with this as a constant accompaniment, one encounters the most luminous colors and patterns, all asymmetrical but beautifully shaped, very "modern" designs. Everything reminded me very intensely of modern graphic art and painting, and I experienced a reassuring feeling of familiarity in this world of Miro, and Picasso's *Guernica*. I had the confident feeling that I really understood the meaning and expression of these modern forms for the first time, understood their origin and shared in the creative act from which these experiences spring. The idea went through my mind: "If I could only fixate these images, if I could only hold them or reproduce them, then I would be able to say exactly what so many have tried to say." I felt that I was at home in a world of which we obtain only sparse glimpses in works of art, and I felt that I had

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discovered the secret of their origin, the source whence all this sprang. It seemed only a matter of skill to pinpoint what I visualized, to bring it on paper or canvas as a most articulate form of artistic expression. The most dominant theme was one of "modernness," and the expression of our own age and future ages.

Another peculiar feature was the conviction I had of the objectivity of these visual forms. They must exist "out there," they must have existence independent of me and my experience. I can participate — better, I can see, reach out, touch them; I have the privilege of being confronted with essences, in tangential transaction with essences. In all of this, now, it may well be that the major factors were the ideas and preoccupations I had prior to the experience, i.e., seeing fragments of Picasso's *Guernica* and being concerned with the notion of the objectivity of values, in a philosophical sense.

The next stage, so to speak, although not directly differentiable because of the extremely fluid boundaries and the elimination of structured spatiality, was an acute loss of time perspective or time-boundness. Past and future faded away, and one was living exclusively and ecstatically in the present, here and now. Time did not flow, no temporal movement — it practically stood still — it felt like glassy warm glue, of heavy viscosity. There was no concern with time, which was most significant of all. It manifested itself in temporary abandonment (objectively speaking) of tasks one set out to do, but forgetting and leaving things unattended to and suspended without remembering, and trying to continue only to become oblivious again of what one was trying to accomplish. Acts or designs were often acutely experienced as ideas, with no potential. One developed an acute inability to act. I wanted to do certain things like getting up and moving to another place or to eat something, but I was unable to accomplish it. Either I was too lazy, unable to move, or the idea in itself was satisfying without realization in action. Phenomenologically, it was not like a traditional motive or wish that one felt, that I wanted to do something; rather, it was more like an idea I had of something which then vanished or oscillated into something else. I did act on occasion, however, and my actions had a peculiarly felt design and purpose. I had to do this and that, there was a certain compulsive quality about it, just this and no other way. Momentarily I became aware of the exclusiveness of the design. I was strangely free, I had only one thought, everything else did not matter at all.

One feature of this is the "power of perception." One seems unable to execute an act like walking over to sit down in another chair, but this is wholly compensated for by merely thinking about it. Seemingly, one does not have to move physically but can just as easily move about "spiritually," to use a crude and ambiguous concept. It appears that one is no longer bound by physical laws of movement, as though one were free to soar or glide through space in some non-material form and leave one's body behind much like a corpse. One has an exhilarated feeling of lightness and freedom from

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restriction, as if one were living five feet off the ground and moving like a breeze of air.

I ate grapes and bananas, and they tasted most delicious in a very rich and sensuous way. Chewing and swallowing were intensely pleasurable, and one could really abandon oneself completely in the exploration of this singular sensuous experience, which literally came over one without one's active participation. Everything else was screened out, one was not able to hold more than one thought, image, or feeling in one's consciousness simultaneously. I felt suffused with feeling. Only global differentiations of one's feeling-states, which alternatively took possession of oneself, could be made. I felt sometimes hot, warm, or cool, but never totally unpleasant.

At times I felt that the only problem left in my world was the regulation of temperature in order to maintain this intensely pleasurable, secure, peaceful, permanent, even eternal state of suspendedness in a communion. The means-end thinking dropped out completely. There is a tremendous sense of freedom involved, freedom from different wants, freedom from having to do things, freedom from one's past and future. Things are arranged for one, if one only trusts. Momentarily one might worry about who is there outside our state to keep this going, because I am certainly unable to do so at this time; but these detachments are few and brief. It is more like things happen, one no longer carries plans around in one's head, no designs, no purposes, no goals, just the NOW.

There always seems to be only one — if any — instantaneous purpose, here and now, a sole concern, a single problem, which has to do with the immediate situation, like changing the temperature, one's temperature. It is tremendously difficult to visualize and realize action-patterns, how to go about certain things, because one is so captured by the moment, caught up in the immediate, bathing oneself in sensuous experience from which one cannot remove oneself.

One has a strong sense of communion — one wants to share and to extend the experience for all those present. There arose a very strong feeling of fellowship among the group, a feeling of shared knowledge, experience and privilege. The atmosphere was almost that of a sanctuary. We had made it, we were chosen and rewarded. It was like having reached a safe harbor. This security made everybody present very unthreatening. There was plenty to share, one was in a giving and sharing mood. One could really give oneself without any pretense or reservation. One felt definite kinship and unity with the whole group, which had transcended all kinds of pettiness and earthly worry; one did not need to pretend. Therefore, I felt acutely that I was encountering the people as persons, as they really are, without any distortion of role status or accomplishment. I felt as if I could penetrate directly to everybody's soul. There was a gratifying and reassuring openness about my own feeling, although I still felt not quite able to communicate this openness and acceptance.

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The total atmosphere was definitely paradisaical and heavenly. I had the notion of "this is it," "this is the moment of truth," "I know that everything leads to this," "this is complete harmony and ecstasy." There were moments where the concern was: who will relinquish this willingly in order to continue to take care of things outside this group? More importantly: who will see to it that the state continues, that the ordinary tasks of the world are attended to? There was a singular absence of concern with technical things or with the general problems of civilization. All everyday activities seemed far removed and futile.

I felt that I was unable to take care of anything physically. I could not do anything if, for instance, the fire from the fireplace spread to the whole building. Rather I felt that the conflagration was spreading and that it should spread, and there was a glowing overmeaning in this word of conflagration for me. But there was never a sensation of fear or apprehension for me, or a realization that anything could happen to us. We, and I felt this quite distinctly, were inviolable, we had arrived, we were unified with the ground of being, we were already transfigured, dead and at the same time so intensely alive as never before. I experienced a sense of initiation and participation in a great mystery; everything became knowing and known.

There was an acute awareness of the others in the room, but only when they were present. Most of the time people floated in and out of my experiential horizon. When they were there, they had to be there — it could not be any other way — everything had to be just as it was. There was a surging sensation of appropriateness and "rightness" about everything that went on: it could not conceivably be any other way. Viewing the others, there was an overwhelming and continuous, vibrating, sensuous feeling and expression of ecstasy. There were no visions or desires of actual physical union or even physical contacts but rather a type of spiritual interpenetration — two veils being drawn over each other. The unitive feeling had the power and sensation of a warm shower in which one became completely enveloped. Physical distance was not experienced as such. A glance or visual impression felt like a reaching out and amoeba-like engulfment. One lived in one's glance, one extended oneself in one's visual projection, one lived and travelled with one's eyes and view.

One became acutely aware of facial details, like quivering lips and vibrating noses which signalled the experience of ecstasy and which gave testimony to the universality of one's feelings and the harmonious and parallel, or simultaneous, resonance in this experiential community. One became aware of lips, cheeks, the falling of hair, and eyes which had the most remarkable depth and radiation. Faces became mysterious, stylized, angelic, transfixed, idealized. There was a *double entendre* about every gesture, glance and movement. Everything seemed like a sophisticated and overwhelming "come-on" game, intensely eroticized. The people looked as if they were on stage, acting and

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behaving in a slow and deliberate yet overdrawn and stilted manner. The women present changed perceptibly toward ideal pictures or representations of the sensuous temptress or the Madonna. I had the feeling of participating in a very modern drama; all movements were affected and stilted, much like the stalking movements of animals (e.g., pointing dogs) who circle each other, facing in different directions yet acutely and mysteriously centered around a common core of meaning and purpose; engaged and knowing.

I was definitely aware of several levels of communication going on among the people present, strictly according to the degree of previous acquaintance or affinity or familiarity. There was a peculiar experience of areas of limits and liberties — as if a grate of restrictions and freedoms had been laid over the interactions of the people present. A glance was as powerful and as direct a message as the most private and elaborate verbal statement, and, consequently, the direction of looking seemed to move in preordered or guided channels. Particularly the meeting of eyes, the knowing look that binds and draws two people together was governed by the perceived degree of liberties in terms of previous familiarity. The mere observation of others, on the other hand, looking at aspects of others, profiles, hands, and lips — this kind of sensuous, esthetic meditation, (better, contemplation) of the features of others — seemed singularly appropriate and justified. The quality of visual interpenetration as a form of very intimate and personal communication through one's gaze became very apparent.

Although only the people present seemed to count, or to exist — i.e., seemed to constitute one's experiential world — there were moments in which one wished to have others join, particularly those dearest to one (but not present), to have them share in this unique and most wonderful of experiences, which transcends everything imaginable. The general feeling with regard to the others was one of unqualified benevolence. The common experience exerted a strong unifying force. There was absolutely no hostility or malice.

This is definitely an "end-in-itself" experience and phenomenon. The only ambition during the state seems to be to maintain it, and this by small correctives in the global situation such as finding the right place to sit, to lie down or to stand, or to adjust the temperature. As to the rest, one is completely suspended and truly living in one's experiences much more so than ever before. Activity is activity, situation is situation, and they should remain what they are, as everything — one feels — should remain what and as it is, no change is contemplated or desired, the purest suspension in "presentness" imaginable. Any form of utilitarian thinking is pushed out. It is a peculiar style or immersion into "passivity." Of course one moves, things are changed, there is much fluidity, etc., but this is perceived as happening to one, as a disturbance, as disequilibrium only to return to the state of tranquillity and suspendedness.

I had a profound experience of otherness" and "differentness." The ordering principles, particularly the directing forces of our mind, are relinquished.

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The self-reference recedes into the background, and the judgmental ability or the motivation for forming opinions and judgments vanishes.

One's gaze is synonymous with the direction of one's living. One is fully tuned in. One lives in one's senses, mostly visual, the most peculiar experience of "I-am-my-glance; I-am-in-my-eating." I fully participate in the activity without reservations, I am wandering, gliding, soaring through a phantasy world in exploration. I have escaped from the boundary and localization or fixation of my physical body and completely lack that usual and typical self-reflection and self-anchoring of my normal existence by which I channel and categorize experience in the appropriate barrels or regions of experience-collection.

The symbol of the way or voyage is most appropriate: being on one's way, in a novel and mysterious world which is totally unfamiliar and in which the familiar is transformed into something bizarre. One moves in wonderment and awe, is drawn here and there, beckoned and invited by the phantastic phenomena that reveal themselves. It seems futile to start comparing that which happens, with previous experience or familiar structures; one can only try to keep oneself open to the drama of presentation, and to respond to the vibrant and dazzling invitation to a graceful, sensory and experiential dance. A phenomenon is encountered, I accept it, questioningly; a new phenomenon intrudes, and again I acknowledge its self-disclosure. I am on the way, this is how it has to be, and it would be presumptuous, I would be to that extent deprived, if I tried to manipulate what was revealing itself, and to make it over in my own image.

I believe that it is a mistake to believe that I can use the experience to gain insight into myself in an analytical sense, to use it as a sort of magnifying glass, microscope, or focused beam to penetrate into the mysteries of my self-structure or self-organization. I would rather tend to use it to gain insight into the potentials of consciousness and different states of consciousness of which I am capable. I would like to experiment with differing experiential worlds, that of the modern age, the Baroque, the Gothic, etc. I would like to transform the environment in a way that would be conducive and visionary in this kind of a world, while recording my impressions either by talking out loud or by writing simultaneously.

I would say that I can gain insight into the nature of consciousness or experience, the meaning and essence of being and the experience of harmony, the mystery of life, communion and sharing, the delight of ecstasy, the temporary suspension of rules, the primacy of being over any form of having. Being-in-relationship — yes; in relationship with the objective world of things and experiential states, the prearranged balance and harmony of everything. I encounter appropriateness in myriad manifestations, I participate in a kind of harmonious and convincing equilibrium, in the way everything truly is, and how everything should be. I almost acknowledge a *Divine* order because I know that it exists: I participate in it, I create it and am created by it, I live it and am lived by it, it reveals itself to my being.

IV

This was my second experience with this wonderful drug. I'm with the same group as the first session. At only one time during this session was my own experience anything like the first, and for a very short time. The drug was not as powerful to me as it was before. The session was very quiet and peaceful. Everyone wrapped up not in their own world as last time, but in deep thought. We all took the drug at about 10 minutes to 11 and then we all went and lay on our respective beds. G. brought in his tape recorder and a couple of tapes he had made of a number of records, a few I'd heard before, but the others seemed new to me. I only recognized one record really, an East Indian record, that was played at my last session.

About 20 minutes after taking the drug we all grew very serious, deep in thought. I felt a twitch in my left eye and on occasion I still have it when I get excited or nervous. The next effect that came about was a pleasant warmth in the room. The room did not change, except to become more gayly colored and friendly. I guess the next thing that happened, happened while I was looking at a photography magazine. I was a little toward the edge of the bed and I began getting dizzy and felt that I would fall off the bed as I settled myself comfortably in the middle of it. Then I felt as though the pillow I had my head on would fall to the floor. I began moving it and it fell to the floor. I remarked to G. when I got up to get it, that I knew it was going to happen.

I smoked while the drug took its hold of me, but not at all for about two hours. I looked through a book of Picasso's paintings that G. had brought in and also the photography book, before the drug really took hold of me.

My bed was in the same spot as the last bed I lay in when I had my last session — over between two windows, then near the record player; at this session near the tape recorder. And the sun came in the window directly behind me.

Next, I began getting extremely nervous. I paid no attention to any of the others, nor they me. I just lay back with a come-what-may attitude. The others did the same. It was so peaceful and content just lying there on that bed. If I moved, I got nervous and shaky. But I felt I would stay in the bed forever, that I would never leave it, nor did I want to.

I tried to think of the people I knew outside and some of the things I'd done with them, but I just couldn't do it. I tried very hard to recall the fun and good times I'd had with these people, but as I said, I couldn't.

So I tried thinking of the people I'd met while I'd been in here and in other jails. I couldn't do that either.

Then all at once I could think of the people I knew both in and out of jail, but not of the good times and the fun I'd shared with them, just all the

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bad things I'd done with them, to them, and the way I treated them. I shut this out and started thinking of what I wanted out of life and how I was going to go about getting these things, not the material things, for under the drug material things did not matter to me at all. But again nothing came. I could not control the pattern of thought, all that I experienced was a period of complete nothingness, a void, empty, devoid of thought. This blank period seemed to last for some time, the only thing I could do was let the drug stimulate my thoughts. As soon as I stopped trying to think of what I wanted, the drug took over on the same pattern of thought as I had experienced in my first session.

The last Indian record came on and I closed my eyes: nothing, no color, nothing at all. I opened my eyes and felt very dizzy, so I closed my eyes again and all of a sudden a vision came unto me, waves of sound, strings waving with sound, the music, its very strings danced before me. The strings were gold, bright and brilliant. A voice came from the strings, mystical and Godlike in its tone, precise in its pronunciation, far away and abstract in its meaning to me. Then I saw the little green man again, emerald green, robe about him, long legs and arms wrapped about himself, bald head shining with light, long thin ears, bright green eyes, sly wide, grinning mouth. He had gold earrings in his ear, long, thin eyebrows and a little beard growing from his chin. He spoke of the music, of the very strings he sat upon.

Then I was scared. I thought someone had pulled a trick on me, and the little man disappeared. I thought to myself someone has dubbed the record with their voice, someone who I don't know, someone very clever in his trickery. Someone wanted to hypnotize me, make me the living, speaking dead. I told myself that there was time and that I would let myself be hypnotized. Then I realized I'd heard this record, these strings, this voice, at my last session and that I had seen this little green man also. And that I thought someone had dubbed the record, that it was a trick to hypnotize me and that I wanted to be hypnotized then too. Then it all went away. And in its place came once again the vast, empty desert. And the mountain range with its one high mountain reaching into the cosmic sky. I saw myself running as I did before. I came to the mountain and climbed it in a running gait. I reached the top. There was the same rock, the softness of it still there. On this rock was a man, a man both young and old. He had about his slim body, a liquid robe of the bluest blue. He had his hands folded in his lap. They seemed to glow, his fingers were long and bony and his hands slim and fine. He was looking into the sky and did not hear me. He had long, womanlike hair, smooth and shiny and black, coal black. I could only see part of his face, a small pointed beard covered his cheeks and chin, his eyes glowed with a yellow light and his nose was long and thin. He seemed to be speaking but I could not hear him. Maybe he was praying. I spoke to him, "Hey man, what are you doing here? I know you. I saw you before on a mountain." No answer. I could not help talking jive talk, abstract words. Then the vision disappeared and did not return.

THE PSYCHEDELIC REVIEW

The next thing that came to me surprised me greatly. It's the same thing I wanted to think of before. I saw my friends, everyone I ever knew, had anything to do with, I knew their names. But all I saw, all I heard, scared me. It's all the bad things I'd ever done to this certain person, that certain person, people I thought I loved, I'd hurt them and they in turn hurt me. I saw the girls I'd gone with, the guys I hung with, my family, my relations, different people I knew. But all that would come was the bad, stealing, lying, beating, hurting, swearing, cheating, insulting, things I could no longer think of without feeling guilty. I saw guys in here, in other jails, heard about what they were doing, what they'd done. It was all so scary, so horrible. Sickening in its impact. I saw what a life of crime was, hated it, fought it, licked it. Hopeless people caught up in it, the small-times doing the pettiest, vilest things. Things that make me shake to just think of them. The poor small-time criminal, unfortunate, gutless being, fighting the world they live in. They fought the people they loved, hated people that did not a wrong. Spit on them and the only people that really matter.

I hated crime, I now thought in this vision, and it meant something, but what? Then this too disappeared. I got up at this period and went to the bathroom. I wasn't drunk this time, nor was I dizzy. Nor did I want to stay in this bathroom as I did before. I weighed nothing in my mind as I did before. I just did it with little forethought. I smoked cigarettes now, one after another. They tasted rotten. By the taste, I felt I did not want to smoke, but I smoked four or five butts. I looked at the food on the table, I wasn't hungry. I looked at the milk there, drank one glass, wanted more so I drank someone else's glass too. It tasted wonderful, sweet and warm. I went over to the window and saw a few guys in the yard playing basketball. It looked like fun. Some of the other guys were on the football field practicing for Sunday's game. They looked very good out there, even better I thought with no other team on the field. I heard the yard radio, advertising some new car. I giggled, it seemed very funny that someone should be telling the con what car they should buy. What a waste of work.

I went back over to the bed and lay down and started thinking about the crime bit once again. I found, now, that I could control my thoughts, the music was washed out, I paid no attention to it. I saw that crime was foolish, a coward way out, a ridiculous flaunt in a child's game. Anyone could steal, anyone could kill, anyone could hurt the ones that loved them. But not anyone could be a cold, calculating, professional criminal. To be this, one would have to cut one's love from his life, his heart from his body his mind would be as a robot. Anyone could be a drunk. It took nerve to steal, but it took more nerve to be honest to fight for the right things in life, to live and let live.

A criminal, at least myself and all I've ever met, were either unloved children or lost individuals. Lost between right and wrong. What they wanted and the means to it. They knew their ends, power, wealth, money could not buy friends, loved ones, happiness, beauty, intelligence. I saw how foolish

Four Psilocybin Experiences

the game I played was, just saw through it, saw the ends I would find, instead of the ends I'd imagined. Disaster! Everything seemed so hopeless, so foolish, so futile, not a bit of fun, no love involved. It sickened me, what was life, a life of this kind, just misery for myself and those who loved me.

I again asked what I wanted from life and at once I got an answer — love, peace, plenty, intelligence, not power but friends.

I felt all wise now, all knowing. I got up from my bed and paced the room for a few minutes and smoked a few more cigarettes. I went over and sat on the table. G. came over and we talked, I don't recall of what. Then I went over and started looking through the book of paintings again. They were all beautiful, all so simple. G. came over and we both found two pictures we talked lengthily on, I liked them, he liked them. Then I saw a bag of chips on the table, opened them and began eating them. They were very good. I asked G. if he wanted some. He said no.

I looked at L., then closed my eyes and saw him again with a face following him, a woman's face. I got scared at this and felt I was going crazy. I told myself, "I'm not going crazy, it's the drug, it's the drug," but still I saw this. It's then that I opened my eyes and went to the bathroom. There couldn't have really been a blank spot in my thought after all.

I started looking through the photography magazine and saw pictures I didn't see the first time I looked at it. I fell for one of the pictures of a young woman, and I felt I must some day meet this woman and make love to her. G. came over once again and I showed him the picture, he said it wasn't his type. I asked him what was his type. He went through the magazine trying to find his type. He found one, a face, a look of living enticement. I now knew his type, I asked him what his interests were and he said photography, a little art. I knew most of his other interests. We talked about art, about photography. He said his wife did some painting and drawing, that he took some photos and slides. I asked him what his wife looked like and he vaguely described her to me. I asked him if his baby had blue eyes, he said yes. We started talking again and he went away. And he listened to the music. I went around the room a few times feeling very energetic, very wise, very powerful, very handsome.